

VZCZCXRO1470
PP RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLH RUEHLN RUEHLZ
RUEHNEH RUEHPW RUEHROV RUEHVK RUEHYG
DE RUEHAH #1429 3081028
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 031028Z NOV 08
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1791
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 4454
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 2266
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 2131
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 2702
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0919
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 3021
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 001429

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN; DRL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: ALLEGED CONSPIRATOR IN 2002 PLOT
AGAINST NIYAZOV RELEASED

¶1. (SBU) Post was able to confirm that Saparmurad Seidov, a named conspirator in the 2002 attack on former President Niyazov's motorcade, was released from prison, having served nearly all of his six-year sentence. A local embassy staff member who knows a friend of the family confirmed that he had been freed. The family is planning to hold a Sadaka, or sacrificial meal soon to give thanks for his release. Internet opposition websites Chronika and Gundogar were the first to report on October 27 that according to "a source within Turkmen law enforcement," Turkmenistan's first Ministry of National Security ("MNB") chairman, General-Major Seidov had been released from prison. Seidov was found guilty of having a role in the 2002 attack, along with 55 others who were publicly tried and sentenced.

¶2. (SBU) He received a six-year prison term for his crime. He was one of only seven people sentenced in January 2003 who received sentences of less than 10 years. His role in the attack was reportedly described in the confession of the main attack planner, former Minister of Foreign Affairs Boris Shikhmuradov. The confession was published as a book called &Me and My Accomplices--Terrorists8 in 2004, and Seidov was portrayed as a significant conspirator who was poised on the day of the attack to take control of the main MNB headquarters. Nonetheless, there has been no information on the precise charges for which he was found guilty, and his sentence was short compared to most.

¶3. (SBU) The six-year sentence he received stood in stark contrast to the majority of conspirators who received 18-25 year sentences. At the time of the 2002 attack, Seidov had already been retired from his post. He had been the first national security chief when Turkmenistan became independent, serving from May 1992 through April 1999.

¶4. (SBU) COMMENT: Post has not been able to learn the circumstances of Seidov's release. It is possible he was in poor health, or that his family had negotiated for his release, or that a decision to rehabilitate him had been made. Regardless, it has given hope to those who are still awaiting word of their own jailed family members. END

COMMENT.
CURRAN